DISTRICT SURVEYORS' FEES.

A return of fees received by surveyors of districts, from the 1st of January, 1845, to 1st of March [illegible]6 (a period of fourteen months), as ordered by the House of Commons, is now before us. The production of this document, we are disposed to think, will lead to important results,—perhaps to an alteration in the system altogether. We abstract the following startling facts:—

The total amount of fees paid to district surveyors for new buildings, within the fourteen months (5,074 completed; 2,007 in progress) is.....	£9,376	3	0
For additions or alterations (9,300 completed; 925 in progress)	9,242	13	0
For party-walls	209	17	0
For special duties	1,236	8	8
Shewing that the metropolitan public has altogether paid the sum of.....	£20,064	16	8

The following are some of the largest amounts received by individual surveyors within the periods named, without deducting the expenses incurred, or the sums remaining unpaid to them.

	£.	s.	d.
The surveyor of the northern division of London.....	428	15	0
Hackney	762	13	0
St. Leonard, Shoreditch	560	5	0
Islington	994	16	0
St. Pancras	1283	15	0
St. Giles, &c.	475	15	0
Paddington	945	3	0
Chelsea	673	19	0
South Kensington	637	16	0
St. Margaret, Westminster	520	13	0
St. George, Hanover-square ..	772	13	0
Newington, part of Lambeth, &c.	919	1	0
St. Saviour, and part of Lambeth	438	14	0
South Lambeth.....	476	8	0
Camberwell	454	16	0
Bermondsey.....	500	6	0

BUILDERS' ESTIMATES.

Mr. Editor,—The leading article in a late number of your valuable journal upon "Builders' Estimates," induces me to beg your insertion of the following communication, shewing how in some instances, estimates when not opened in the presence of parties are treated by committees.

A short time since I was informed by letter from an architect, that the committee of the London and County Joint Stock Bank were willing to receive tenders for alterations to their premises at Romford. I prepared my estimate, and forwarded it, endorsed as directed, to the architect's office, the amount of which was 61*l.* Out of five other persons applied to, only one other estimate was received, the amount of which I have since learned was 64*l.*; the other parties declined, in consequence of the shortness of the time allowed for making the estimates. Upon inquiry, I was told a week afterwards, the committee had not decided upon the estimates, and the following week I received another letter from the architect, informing me they had declined to accept my tender, it not being the lowest.

The treatment I have in this instance to complain of is, that the person who is employed to do the work, and whose estimate is 59*l.*, was not applied to until after the first two estimates were opened.

I am, Sir, &c.,
Romford, Aug. 4, 1846. Jno. Bartlett.

Sir,—In a recent contract for a public building, open to all that are qualified, the advertisement expressly states: the tenders are to be sent in by a given time, and the names of two responsible sureties are also to be named and sent with the tenders. One of the said contractors does not conform to the requisition of the committee, but states at the bottom of his tender—should mine be the lowest tender, my sureties shall be forthcoming, or words to that effect.

Now my opinion is, that the non-compliance with the requisition renders the party so tendering ineligible as a contractor; and that legally all parties, in the event of a person so tendering being employed, may recover the expenses to which they have been put in preparing their tender and estimate. A person so tendering may guess at an amount in all open contracts, and if too low, back out by stating his sureties are not willing, &c. I should like much to have your opinion in your next number, if you will take the trouble, which may lead to other remarks from your very numerous and able correspondents, and assist to purge contracting of some of its abuses.

From an Old Subscriber.

Aug. 3rd, 1846.

*** It does not appear to us that much is gained by forcing builders to ask persons to become their sureties, without the certainty of needing the favour. The mere fact of having named his sureties would not prevent one who was so inclined, from declaring off under the circumstances named.

Still, if the requirement be made in the first instance, it should in justice be insisted on from all.

STATE OF THE LONDON CHURCH-YARDS.*

In any change of burying places there must be some lesion of private feeling, always to be regretted; therefore the less that it can be done with the better. That it will be done, however, now, every one must see; with the less surprise, that it ought to have been long ago, a shocking system having been carried on in the teeth of common propriety and decency.

No government, consequently, could long resist it, supposing it were disposed. But it is very satisfactory to see that *Sir George Grey* has not only accepted the subject for next session, but shewn an honourable personal interest in the question.

At *Islington*, the old churchyards are so crammed, that it is almost impossible to sink a new grave in them. The coffins in the vaults (all lead) are above the level of the ground, and visible through the grated windows—not a desirable circumstance in some respects. There is a better ground at the *Chapel of Ease*, Holloway, not so much used as it might be. Besides a small general one styled "*New Bunhill*," these are the only ones for 55,000.

St. Luke's, Old-street (50,000), is better, from a noble private gift of four or five acres at the back of the church; but this is, not slowly, filling.

At *Shoreditch*, the old church-yard is not very large, about 3 acres, and the *poor-ground*, very dirty, not half that size. But as there are church-yards at *Hoxton* and *Haggerstone*, the aggregate parish, with upwards of 80,000 inhabitants, may not be so badly situated as some others.

Bethnal Green, with 75,000, has, the writer regrets to find, only the *old* churchyard, perhaps 3½ acres, rather improved. *Ten* new churches have been established, and the writer fully believes, that the poor (whose wretched condition he described at length in a statement in the *Morning Herald*, at Easter 1838) are much more kindly attended to—but *not one* burying-ground.

Whitechapel, upwards of 30,000 inhabitants, has a church-yard (besides a "poor-ground"), less than an acre and a half,—less than a *third* of what it ought to be, and its appearance is very far from creditable to the parish; though in all such cases a church-yard *must* resemble a kitchen-garden much more than a field; not a pleasant, but, unhappily, a very true comparison. The ground (to the south only) of the large church of *Spitalfields* is too small for 20,000 inhabitants. *St. George's*, and other parishes beyond the Tower, are rather better; but if the whole of *Stepney* church-yard, though very large, is not yet occupied, it cannot always last as the *only* one for *ninety thousand* inhabitants!

Some suburbs—as *Hackney* (especially), *Kensington*, *Chelsea*, and *Newington* (but not the "Borough"), are in a better state than more inward parishes; but reasons for a better system will occur in more than one of them.

In the *Borough*, *St. Saviour's* churchyard has very properly, though too lately, been closed. The writer first perceived a *certain* effect *above* ground, here, in London. There is also a small inclosure by Union-street, and another at some almshouses—the aggregate quite insufficient for 20,000 inhabitants. *Christ Church*, with the same population, is not much better furnished—the ground very dirty. *St. George's*, with 46,000 inhabitants, the writer believes much too limited: *St. Olave's* and *St. John's*, better. The town district of *Lambeth* tolerable. *St. John's*, Waterloo-road, auxiliary to the same, has a ground of moderate size, much and becomingly ornamented with flowers, but fast tenanted. St. Paul's, *Deptford*, though a very considerable churchyard, is said to be, in parts, in a very bad condition, not very unlike the most horrible of *all*—Portugal-street, Lincoln's-Inn-fields. At *Greenwich*, the churchyards are getting inadequate to the doubled population—30,000.

Of extra-mural *City* parishes, *Aldersgate* has a very neat churchyard, but not sufficient for 5,000 inhabitants. *Bishopsgate*, 12,000, must be termed both limited and slovenly; the keeping graves for the poor unclosed and unfilled up, a practice stopped several years ago at *St. Giles*, has been denounced, here, by the press. *Aldgate*, 10,000, is said to have half an acre, but it looks to the writer much less. A shocking accident here, a few years back, called attention to the subject. The inhabitants of neighbouring houses are often obliged to keep their windows shut to exclude the vitiated atmosphere;—surely a crying fact, requiring little addition.

In many churchyards, if the graves could be dug from *twenty yards* deep, and filled to within two yards of the surface, there *might* be decency without premature disturbance. On any other principle, putting aside "pyramids" above ground, or combustion of bodies,—physically impossible. If any one thinks this a "foolish flourish," let him use his eyes and understanding. "Omne *minus* continet in se *majus*," would as little do in mathematics as logic.—"But why say things to excite and harrow persons' feelings?"—Why does a surgeon use *caustic*, when he feels a disease is both curable and *must* be cured? (Selfish and cruel experiments were a very different thing).

J. D. Parry.

* See page 390, *ante*.

ELECTRIC CONDUCTORS FOR BUILDINGS.

Sir,—I noticed in a daily journal that the spire of the new church at Leicester was struck by the lightning, during the late terrific storm, and nearly destroyed. I trust some correspondent will send you an account of it, and state whether any electric conductor was attached to it, and how constructed, in case such provision was made.

I am of opinion that every pyramidal composition, whether spire or steeple, under which name I class most of our new metropolitan churches, should be provided with so simple and cheap a safeguard. I have directed the execution of many lightning conductors on Professor Murray's principle (which he communicated to me many years ago*), and had the opportunity of testing their efficacy during the past month, at a new church in course of erection in Yorkshire, which is built upon a considerable eminence to a height of nearly 130 feet, and, consequently, is more exposed than any other object near it. The conductor was fixed to the spire, forming a portion of the cross, and continued past its base in as direct a line as possible, down the tower to within twenty feet of the ground. The scaffolding was not struck, and the poles ran several feet above the point of the conductor.

The flash was seen, and on leaving the unfinished end in its course to the rock (on which the church is built), a sharp sound at the same instant was produced, which the workmen who were sheltered under a shed, within 50 feet of the tower, described like "the crack of a rifle;" and this was immediately followed by a heavy peal of thunder, which so terrified the workmen that they hastened out of the church-yard; no damage whatever was done to the building. I have heard from several parties who reside near to the works so protected, that they have seen the electric fluid thus safely carried off. The cost in the country has never exceeded half-a-crown a foot, and Murray's conductors (as I have always named them) have saved my works, one of which being partially de-

* Professor Murray, about 1839 or 1836, published a pamphlet, giving a full description of his conductor.

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